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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 19, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT
(Tuesday, March 17, 1959)



Although I had an appointment with the President at 2:30 p. m., in advance of a 2:45 meeting with the Acting Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense and their associates, circumstances permitted me only about three minutes with the President in advance of the other meeting.

I first cleared the Record of Actions of the NSC meeting of March 12 which he approved with a slight modification in punctuation in Section 7 of the Policy in the Event of War.

I then very briefly discussed the meeting which was about to begin and asked the President whether he wished the results of this meeting to be taken to the NSC. He indicated that he did not think it was necessary.

I then pointed out to him that I had planned to devote the NSC meeting of March 19 primarily to a NATO discussion paper. However, Acting Secretary Herter was reluctant to discuss this paper on Thursday particularly in view of the impending Macmillan visit. I then said to the President that if he did not wish to discuss Berlin in the Council and in the light of Mr. Herter's views, I would recommend that the March 19 meeting be cancelled.

I then pointed out to him that the paper which would be presented to him in the immediately following meeting contained a recommendation for study and analysis of four alternatives in the application of force. I reminded him that this had been done under NSC auspices in 1953 with respect to the Korean situation and asked whether he wished NSC auspices to be involved in this case in the event he approved the recommendation. The President felt that it would be desirable.

At that point the participants for the meeting scheduled for 2:45 entered the President's office.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12065, Sec. 3-204

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MR 80-67 #15
By DJH Date 9/3/81

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PORTIONS EXEMPTED

E.O. 12065, Sec. 1.301 (b)(1)(c)(d)

NIC 6/1/81 6/10/81

RLR Date 9/2/81

Those present were:

From the President's staff:

General Persons
General Goodpaster
Gordon Gray

From the Defense Department:

Secretary McElroy
Deputy Secretary Quarles
General Twining
Assistant Secretary Irwin

From the State Department:

Acting Secretary Herter
Deputy Under Secretary Murphy
Assistant Secretary Merchant
Assistant Secretary Smith

Mr. Herter opened the meeting by suggesting that the President read the memorandum which had been prepared for the President and signed by him and Mr. McElroy, which is attached.

The President approved the memorandum in general.

With respect to paragraph 5, the President indicated that in his view all negotiations require and imply some flexibility. However, he said that we cannot modify our basic principle and that we might not even be able to modify our position with respect to stamping.

With respect to paragraph 6, the President indicated that the real difference between (a) and (b) was Chancellor Adenauer. The President rather indicated that he prefers the position of the Department of Defense as expressed in paragraph (b).

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With respect to paragraph 7, the President suggested that paragraph (b) should read: "Four alternative uses of force in the event we have failed to resolve the difficulty through political negotiations..." The President indicated that he did not fully understand 7(b)(1). However, he agreed that he wanted the studies made.

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PORTIONS EXEMPTED
E.O. 12055, Sec. 1-301 (b)(1)(c)(d)
NJC letter 6/10/81
NLE Date 9/2/81

He then raised the question of a possible break in diplomatic relationships with the Soviet Union. He felt that he would like to know more about the situation with respect to trading with the bloc. He realized that our trading was of negligible quantity but he was interested in knowing what volume of trade would be involved if the allies stopped trading.

With respect to blockade, the President indicated that he did not want to go into that until we were prepared for reprisals.

It was agreed that pending the survey called for in paragraph 3 of the memorandum, no decisions could be made with respect to the access control problem.

The President read and approved the proposal advanced by the JCS in Tab B, in general. As to No. 1 the President indicated that we should not make the USAREUR military strength any weaker than it is now. He reserved decision as to whether at a later time the JCS recommendation of bringing combat and logistic elements up to full strength should be adopted. He seemed to agree with Mr. McElroy that this was a step which could be taken at a later time.



Gordon Gray



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